



**Bobby Morris Playfield Renovation Project**  
**Public Meeting #3**  
**Jan. 28, 2004**  
**Meeting Notes**

**Staff Present:**

- **Royal Alley-Barnes**, Central East Sector Manager
- **Rich Hennings**, Major Maintenance Manager
- **Eric Gold**, Project Manager, Landscape Architect
- **Kim Baldwin**, Landscape Architect
- **Joelle Ligon**, Public Relations Specialist

**7 p.m. Welcome**

- The first 10 minutes of the meeting were set aside for the community to view the latest drawings for the project and to have informal discussions with Parks staff.

**7:10 p.m. Introduction**

- Parks Major Maintenance Manager Rich Hennings discussed the meeting objectives, including reviewing Alternative #2, choosing geometric configurations and colors for base layout.
- Rich reviewed the budget issues, including the Council action in November 2003 that took \$400,000 from the Bobby Morris Playfield project, leaving the project with about \$1.3 million. We have verified the Cost Estimate based on the revised plan and will need the full allocation as originally requested to proceed. We have been allocated \$100,000 to complete the project design.
- Parks goal is to construct the project in 2005.
- The next steps for the project include a review by the Landmarks Preservation Board on Friday, Jan. 30. [Note- Parks has added five trees along the tennis court edge of the field in response to their suggestion.] In addition, the Board of Park Commissioners will hold a public hearing at their regularly scheduled meeting on Feb. 12, 2004 at 6:30pm. This public hearing will be followed by a discussion and possible recommendation to the Superintendent on Feb. 26, 2004. (Both Park Board meetings are public meetings. Board of Park Commissioner meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month in the Parks Board Room, 100 Dexter Ave., from 6 – 8 p.m.)

## 7:15 p.m. Overview of preferred design alternative

Through December 2003, the Department has accumulated input from neighboring citizens and users of the athletic facility. Significantly, at the November 20 meeting, Concept #2 emerged as the majority preference among the three varying concepts presented. The only considerable change to Concept #2 as presented at the last public meeting occurs on the field surface. The Department has addressed the challenge of multiple surface types with the major users and is recommending that infill-type synthetic turf be used throughout the playing surface. Below is a narrative summary of the recommendation;

- Regrade field surface to 1% gradient, generally from NW to SE.
- A max. 2'-6" wall will hold the surrounding site above the baseball field (field #1) in the NW corner, with the backstop installed directly atop.
- Extend the grading limit in the SE corner to the entry steps, reducing by half the grade separation between the area behind this backstop (field #2) and the adjacent sidewalks. This will eliminate a number of existing steps.
- Construct two symmetrical pathways from behind field #2 generally upward to the adjacent sidewalks for ADA compliant access to other amenities at the site.
- Adjust grade across the north field edge adjacent to the Cal Anderson Shelterhouse by means of a belvedere-like prominence overlooking the field. Provide wide, generously scaled steps down to the field surface. This is the primary connection between the shelterhouse and the field.
- Adjust all other grades from the revised field surface grade to surrounding fixed topography within the landscape.
- Identify the field limit and install infill-type synthetic turf throughout. Play lines are proposed as follows; All baseball lines in white, to include base lines, foul lines, coaches boxes, infield arc, and warning track. Baseball pitchers mound to be portable. Soccer field to be permanently lined in high-contrast yellow, with dimensions to be determined but generally as large as practical.

All fencing remains in its current configuration, with only the backstops being affected by the work. These will be replaced in-kind to respond to grade changes, with minor modifications associated with providing accessibility. To accomplish this without continuing the conflict with pedestrian circulation described previously, the interior loop pathway is not replaced.

## 7:55 p.m. Comments and questions

- **Question:** Is the cost of the project still estimated at \$1.7 million? I spoke with the vendor, and he said if we use only one color, the price could be reduced.  
**Answer:** The square-foot cost of that vendors product may go down as the surface area is increased however it is still slightly more costly than the surfaces it is replacing. There is also significant cost in the construction of the subgrade. Generally yeas, the substitution is equal in cost.
- **Question:** Are the lines permanent? **Answer:** Yes, lines will be inlaid permanently into the surface for soccer, baseball, and softball. Other activities will either require cones or temporary painted lines.

- **Question:** Are all the lines the same width? **Answer:** On the plan, the lines have been drawn proportionally wider than they actually are for visibility. In actuality, the lines are three or four inches wide.
- **Question:** How did we have sports activities out there without the lines before? **Answer:** We striped the field every day during the season. That causes a hard ridge of calcified gypsum where the lines have been drawn.
- **Question:** I am very happy to hear that you have performed a CPTED [Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design] analysis on the recommended plan. Doesn't the fence on 11<sup>th</sup> make it easier for criminals to get away with the service gate locked? My concern is that criminals could stop what they are doing and run before the cops get there. **Answer:** The analysis indicated that we should keep the service gate closed. Patrol officers generally prefer fewer points of exit for individuals they may be in pursuit of.
- **Question:** Is there a possibility of making the baseball and softball lines tan-colored beyond the infields? It might make the field look less busy. **Answer:** The line needs to be visible in order for players to play and for officials to make calls. These lines act as a warning that a player is running out of field surface.
- **Question:** Could the soccer lines be white? **Answer from a soccer playing citizen who was at the meeting:** We would have no problem with white lines. **Answer from staff:** Our intention is to keep the lines for different sports in different colors so that players can get better orientation when playing. We prefer to show the baseball and softball lines as white to maintain tradition.
- **Question:** What are the plans for drainage? **Answer:** We will have six inches of permeable, compacted rock under a layer of smaller rock, which will then be overlaid with the synthetic turf. Beneath that, we will have three runs of perforated French drains.
- **Question:** Where will the field drain to? **Answer:** It will connect to the existing drainage system.
- **Question:** What will happen with the irrigation system? **Answer:** We will need to make significant alterations to the existing irrigation system. We propose removing the control cabinet from its current location and finding a less conspicuous location, perhaps within the shelterhouse.

- **Question:** On the west side of the drawing, there is a lighter green surface. Is that natural grass, and is there a possibility of adding trees along the edge there?

**Answer:** That is natural grass, but we have concerns about adding trees over there for two reasons: 1) the CPTED analysis indicated that shrubbery and trees are contributing factors to illicit activities taking place in the park; and 2) the site already has many deciduous trees around; to add more trees to the west side of the field could cause problems when they drop their leaves. Leaves falling on a non-living surface can be a problem. **Follow-up comment:** We are losing some of the historic sense of the park by losing the pathway and some of the trees. We'd like to maintain the historic feel as much as possible. **Follow-up answer:** Parks will consider the addition of trees.

  - **Citizen follow-up comment:** I think we should have any more trees in this park. We've already got a lot of dogs who use this park. Dog owners will want to use that whole portion of the park with real grass. If the grass isn't there, they will use the synthetic turf, which can cause all kinds of problems.
- **Question:** Are the dug-outs dug in? **Answer:** All of the dugouts are at-grade with the field, but the third base side of Field #1 is about 2' or so below the grade behind them.
- **Question:** Do the backs of the dug-outs have fences behind them? The CPTED analysis indicated that it was not a good idea to have areas where people can hide from view. They are more comfortable engaging in illicit activities when hidden. **Answer:** Traditionally, the dug-out become the field users' defensible space. We did not cover the dug-outs, which is normally the way ballfields are constructed. That was one of the major concessions we made after the CPTED analysis.

  - **Citizen comment:** You want the kids enclosed somewhat so you can control their movements.
  - **Citizen comment:** People put bags in the dugout as a means of protecting against theft- if you remove the fence they will walk away.
- **Question:** Will the shrubs at the north-end landscape strip be removed? Will it help with the CPTED piece? **Answer:** We have chosen to keep that planting strip because it discourages cross traffic across the field.

- **Question:** Can we consider lower fences on the backstop? **Answer:** I think we can consider that.
- **Question:** Will the lighting on the field change at all? I am concerned that the trees will cast shadows on the field, making it hard to see. **Answer:** The proposed field alignment will not affect the lighting. **Comment:** I like the field orientation the way it is – north to south; and I appreciate that you listened to us by covering as much of the field as possible with synthetic turf.
- **Question:** Where will the soccer goals be placed in the off season? **Comment from citizen:** We're pretty much playing 12 months a year at this point, so they will probably be out there all the time, but I think that's a good thing because the busier the field is, the less likely it will be used for illicit activities. **Answer:** Parks acknowledges that the goals can be a visual blight on the field. When they are not in use, we can take them off the field.
  - **Follow-up citizen comment:** As a neighbor, I have seen people come over the school (Seattle Central Community College), and play pick-up games of soccer. I have never seen anyone play a pick-up game of baseball. I don't think it's a bad idea to keep them on the field.
- **Question:** Are the baseball and softball fields the same size? **Answer:** The baseball field is bigger.
- **Question:** If you went with a more minimal dirt geometry for baseball, would it make playing soccer on the field easier? **Answer:** Making the correct size soccer field fit within the color-changes is a challenge, but it works very well the way we are showing it.
- **Question:** Will the sidewalk on the west side of shelterhouse remain untouched during construction? **Answer:** Yes, we will not touch the sidewalk during construction. In fact we hope to keep this walkway open throughout the process.
- **Question:** When will we start construction? **Answer:** In 2005, after the budget is restored.
- **Question:** Will the reservoir be covered by the time we start construction here? **Answer:** There may be some overlap.

**8:25 p.m. Thank you and wrap up**

- Rich reviewed the steps moving forward, which include a presentation to the Landmarks Preservation Board and two meetings of the Board of Park Commissioners.